

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL MUNICH

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AMEMBASSY SOFIA

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USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUDAPEST 0759

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, HU

SUBJ: 11TH HSWP CONGRESS - PERSONNEL CHANGES

REF: (A) BUDAPEST 744, (B) BUDAPEST 758

1. AS NOTED REF (A), 11TH HSWP CONGRESS IS EXPECTED TO CONTINUE POLICIES OF FIRST SECRETARY KADAR WHO WILL REMAIN AT HEAD OF HSWP, HIS POWER AND AUTHORITY NO LESS RESTRICTED THAN HERETOFORE. EARLY LAST YEAR REPORTS OF DECLINING HEALTH AND SHIFTS AFFECTING NYERS AND ACZEL, THE ONE ARCHITECT AND CHIEF EXPONENT OF THE NEM, THE OTHER "CULTURAL CZAR", CAUSED STIR OF UNEASINESS AMONG HUNGARIAN POPULATION EVER SENSITIVE TO SHIFTING OF POLICY WINDS FROM MOSCOW. LAVISH RED CARPET TREATMENT ACCORDED KADAR LAST SEPLOMBER IN MOSCOW PUT AN END TO FEAR HIS RETIREMENT IMMINENT. PRESUMABLY, SOVIETS' GOOD HOUSEKEEPING SEAL OF APPROVAL CONDITIONED BY FACT

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THAT: (A) KADAR HAS PERFORMED HIS TASK WELL OVER

PAST 18 YEARS; (B) SOVIETS WHO ARE CONSERVATIVE PREFER TO DEAL WITH KNOWN QUANTITY AS HSWP LEADER RATHER THAN UNKNOWN; (C) THERE IS NO OBVIOUS SUCCESSOR ON SCENE WITH KADAR'S TALENTS; AND (D) WITH KADAR CONTINUING ON SCENE PUBLIC CONCERN OVER POSSIBLE POLICY SHIFTS WOULD BE EASED.

2. DESPITE EMPHASIS ON STABILITY IN POLICY SPHERE, PERSONNEL CHANGES ARE EXPECTED IN PARTY SECRETARIAT AND POLITBURO. WHILE POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT THESE CHANGES COULD BE NUMEROUS, CAUTION SHOULD BE EXERCISED IN AUTOMATICALLY CONCLUDING THAT OUSTER OF CERTAIN FIGURES FROM PARTY LEADERSHIP POSTS MEANS COMPROMISE OF CURRENT POLICY, PARTICULARLY IN ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL AREAS. CHANGES WILL HAVE TO BE CAREFULLY EXAMINED TO DETERMINE WHETHER THEY ARE REFLECTIVE OF A TRUE SHIFT IN POLICY, OR ARE ONLY COSMETIC, MIRRORING SOVIET PRESSURE AND/OR DISLIKE FOR CERTAIN HUNGARIAN PERSONALITIES.

3. OF 12 MEMBERS PRESENTLY IN POLITBURO, ONLY KADAR, NEMETH, GASPAR, AND BISZKU ARE CERTAIN TO REMAIN. ALMOST CERTAIN TO DEPART ARE NYERS, FEJER, AND NEMES. SHAKY ARE KALLAI, FOCK, APRO, ACZEL, AND BENKE. WE ARE INCLINED TO BELIEVE THAT FOCK AND APRO WILL REMAIN, THE FORMER EVEN IF HE IS NO LONGER PRIME MINISTER, THE LATTER BECAUSE OF KADAR'S SENTIMENTALITY. APRO HAS BEEN IN POLITBURO (1953) LONGER THAN ANY OTHER MEMBER AND IS OLDEST MEMBER OF CC, WITH EXCEPTION OF KADAR, DATING BACK TO 1944. AT 62 HE IS THREE YEARS YOUNGER THAN KALLAI AND FIVE YEARS JUNIOR TO NEMES. WHETHER KALLAI REMAINS IN POLITBURO MAY TO SOME DEGREE DEPEND ON WHETHER FOCK LEAVES AS PREMIER TO HEAD PATRIOTIC PEOPLES FRONT. BENKE IS A SOMEWHAT UNDISTINGUISHED IDEOLOGUE, MAIN REASON FOR HER PRESENCE ON POLITBURO PRESUMABLY BEING THAT SHE IS A WOMAN. WE HAVE HEARD REPORTS THAT SHE WILL BE REPLACED BY MRS. LASZLO ERDEI. ON OTHER HAND, SOME SOURCES SAY THAT SHE MAY BE PUT IN CHARGE OF CULTURAL AND IDEOLOGICAL POLICY IF ACZEL IS REMOVED. WE WOULD RATE ACZEL'S

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CHANCES AT ABOUT 50-50.

4. WHILE HUNGARIAN SOURCES SEEM WILLING TO DISCUSS WHO WILL BE REMOVED FROM POLITBURO, BEYOND A CERTAIN POINT NO ONE SEEMS WILLING TO SPECULATE ABOUT REPLACEMENTS. PUJA SEEMS LIKELY TO ASSUME KOMOC SIN'S POSITION AND IMRE KATONA, SECRETARY OF BUDAPEST COMMITTEE, ALSO SEEMS AN ALMOST CERTAINTY.

THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT CONCLUSION THAT OVARI AND PULLAI, BOTH IN SECRETARIAT, WILL BE ELECTED TO POLITBURO. BOTH ARE AT 50 AMONG YOUNGER ELEMENTS OF HSWP LEADERSHIP. OUTSIDE POSSIBILITIES INCLUDE SANDOR BORBELY, MEMBER OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF BUDAPEST CC AND PARTY DELEGATE FROM CSEPEL, AND PAL ROMANY, PRESENTLY CHAIRMAN OF HSWP COOPERATIVE POLICY WORKING COLLECTIVE AND CHIEF OF PARTY'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT.

5. A CLOSE STUDY OF PARTY ORGANIZATIONS IN COUNTIES AND PRINCIPAL CITIES REVEALS PERSONNEL TURNOVER OF ROUGHLY 30-35 PERCENT IN PARTY COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP. ODDLY ENOUGH, PRINCIPAL SHAKEUPS APPEAR TO HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN CITY COMMITTEES RATHER THAN COUNTY. IN CITIES OF DEBRECEN, GYOR, MISKOLC, PECS, AND SZEGED, NEW PARTY SECRETARIES HAVE REPLACED ALL THOSE WHO WERE IN POST AS RECENTLY AS JUNE 1974. ONLY KATONA IN BUDAPEST REMAINS UNTOUCHED. IN CONTRAST, AT COUNTRY SECRETARY LEVEL THERE HAVE BEEN FAR FEWER CHANGES. OF 76 SECRETARIES IN 19 COUNTIES, THERE HAVE BEEN 14 CHANGES AND ONLY THREE OF THOSE (IN FEJER, GYOR, AND SMOGY) ARE AT FIRST SECRETARY LEVEL.

6. PARTY MEMBERSHIP AS OF JANUARY 1, 1975 WAS 754,353, AN INCREASE OF 13.9 PERCENT COMPARED WITH 10TH CONGRESS. FORTY-FIVE AND ONE-HALF PERCENT OF PARTY'S MEMBERSHIP ARE MANUAL WORKERS OR COOPERATIVE PEASANTS, 40 PERCENT WHITE COLLAR WORKERS, AND REMAINING ROUGHLY 15 PERCENT PRESUMABLY INTELLECTUALS. HSWP HAS ONLY 8,200 PRE-WAR VETAN MEMBERS, MEANING OF COURSE THAT MAJORITY OF PARTY MEMBERSHIP TODAY IS POST-1956.

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